



THEY NEED YOUR HELP!

In the character of the Lithuanian people there is a spiritual fortitude which surmounts despair and despondency bred by adversity. The most recent example of this trait is evident among Lithuanian displaced persons who are suffering an unenviable existence in alien lands of Europe. Instead of wallowing in despair, the Lithuanian D. P.'s have put forth their efforts to foster culture, song, and ambition, to preserve their national treasures in exile. Outstanding example of this effort is the "Čiurlionis Ensemble" which has won acclaim far and wide.

The history of the Ensemble is brief. Mr. A. Mikulskis, director and organizer of the group, studied at the Klaipēda Conservatory of Music in Lithuania. In 1939 he organized the Čiurlionis Chorus in Klaipēda. When Hitler's hordes goose-stepped into Klaipēda (Memel), the Chorus fled from them into Lithuania's capitol, and continued its work.

In August 1944 when the Red army swarmed in to occupy Lithuania for the second time to clamp down its infamous iron curtain on the country, the Chorus was disrupted, its director and members fled out of the country to escape the red terror, to become displaced persons, people temporarily without a home and country. Mr. Mikulskis, finding himself in Vienna, persevered in the aim that Lithuanian song must be preserved at all costs. In very short order, he re-organized the "Čiurlionis Chorus", expanded it into an Ensemble, and led it on the road to fame, despite hardships and suffering. An ardent devotee of Lithuanian cultural and musical heritages, Mr. Mikulskis has revived ancient Lithuanian songs, dances and musical instruments, and has made them sensationaly new and popular. Select members of the Ensemble play such instruments as the primitive "skudučiai" (a version of Pipes of Pan), Lithuanian shepherds' horns, varying in length from 3 to 8 feet, and the beloved "kanklės" (a zither-like instrument).

All members are so versatile, that they sing, dance, play instruments, and give dramatic performances. All wear national Lithuanian costumes, which have been made from old clothing ravelled and re-woven, or which have been improvised from plain cloth, colored in crayon to resemble national designs and coloring. A few managed to save their authentic costumes in their flight from Lithuania.

The Ensemble, composed of about 50 young people (mostly college students), has already given 300 performances in the American, British, and French Zones of Germany and Austria. They are so good, and so popular, that they have been engaged for one month to give pro-

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grams to American occupation forces. All who have seen the performances have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic in their praise of the "Čiurlionis ensemble". Can we hope that some interested group or person would be instrumental in bringing them over to the U. S. A.?

The reader might have formed the impression that this is a professional troupe, operating on a professional standard of remuneration. The sad and bitter truth is that the group, through professional in its work, has been and still is operating under tremendous hardships. They still are displaced persons, living in inadequate barracks and shelters and on meager D. P. rations. Many have fainted while performing because of malnutrition. Many dance bare-footed to conserve their one pair of shoes. If and when they do get financial proceeds from their performances, the sums are insignificant when divided among them. According to information received here, the largest sum per person has been 5 marks. (At present rates in occupied zones, one cigarette costs 5 marks).

They have not appealed for assistance. They ask for no remuneration other than decent subsistence. Knowing of their hardships, and knowing that "Viltis" readers have been generous with aid to Lithuanian D. P.'s, we trust that some "Viltis" benefactor will extend a helping hand to a deserving group with which there are so many common interests. (Food (particularly fats and proteins), shoes, underwear, stockings, and mens' clothing would be very welcome, and, if mailed now, would be received as Christmas gifts. Most important, the gifts would serve as morale boosters to this highly worthy, talented group of youngsters who are striving to nurture the blossoms of culture on the war ruins of Europe. It would encourage them to continue their work in circumstances which would break less sturdy hearts and spirits.

Editor Beliaus, who is to be complimented for his humanitarian efforts in behalf of Lithuanian D. P.'s, we feel certain, will consent to act as intermediary for inquiries, donations and addresses. — Jr.

\$4 CARE PACKAGES DISCONTINUED

Steadily rising prices have made it impossible for CARE to continue its special \$4 flour and \$4 lard packages, announced Paul Comly French, Executive Director of the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe.

In a special statement issued today Mr. French stated that orders for \$4 packages, postmarked later than September 15, would have to be returned.

"It is with great reluctance that I make this announcement," French said, "when flour and fats are so ur-

gently needed in Europe. However, the present upward spiral of prices makes it impossible for CARE to continue these items in separate packages."

Mr. French pointed out that both these items, however, are included in CARE's standard food package. Meats, sugar, milk, egg powder, chocolate, and coffee are also included in this 22 pound package, designed to help feed a family of four for a month.

All CARE packages are non-profit and delivery guaranteed in 15 European countries where CARE has government agreements. CARE packages now available — all at the standard price of \$10 — include food, baby food, woolens or cotton textile, blankets, household linen, baby layette and knitting yarn packages.

To order CARE packages, just send \$10, plus names and addresses of both the donor and recipient to CARE, 50 Broad Street, New York 4, N. Y. A signed receipt is mailed to the donor upon delivery.

SUITS TO ORDER FOR DP'S

You may now place order, in the United States, for suits to be made for relatives and friends who are located in Europe, by a Netherlands company. The suits will be delivered within 16 weeks. They are made of a strong woolen tweed, durably lined, and wide seamed. They come in blue, gray and dark brown colors. Should the orderer not know the size, the Dutch firm will contact the party in Europe to secure the correct measurements. The sizes are: 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44. A suit for European delivery will cost \$18.75. When writing print entire order.

NETHERLANDS WOOLENS, INC.
1775 Broadway at 57th, R-844, New York, N. Y.

A WORD ABOUT THE DP'S

"Places for Displaced Persons": Article in Yale Review

Who are these 900,000 Displaced Persons? Half of them are Poles, Polish Jews you may comment. No; this figure does not include the Jews, who number about 200,000. The rest are mainly Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians.

We know the Poles...
We also know the Polish Jews...
Not many of us have known the Lithuanians, and still less Latvians, in the flesh. They are peoples that never emigrated if they could help it. They took up their abode in the cold, sour lands of Lithuania and Latvia six thousand years or more ago, and have clung to their ancient language, a cousin of Sanskrit — a language thousands of years older than German or Celtic, and, indeed, than Greek or Latin. They have defended themselves against Scythians and Sarmatians, against Huns and Tatars, against Russians and Poles and Germans. Some were brought to the United States by the iron-mining concerns... They proved good workers, some of them huge, of tremendous strength. The second generation distinguishes itself in school. Some of the finest intellects I have encountered are Lithuanians.

The Estonians... settled among the forests and swamps of Estonia in the seventh century, and like the Lithuanians and Latvians, resisted tenaciously one invasion after another through the thirteen hundred years of their European history...

All these people, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians, are by ancient habit lovers of the land, and most of the Displaced Persons of these nationalities are peasants or farm laborers. The peasants cling tenaciously to their poor acres and make crops on land we would abandon to rabbits and foxes. All these people produce

skillful artisans who never heard of the monopolistic saw. "A jack-of-all-trades is master of none." Instead they maintain the principle that an artisan who contents himself with one craft is too enterprising to be master of any craft...

These are the stocks we are holding idle in D. P. camps... What we have in the Displaced Persons is a select stock, physically.

But are they not Communists, wild-eyed adherents of foreign ideologies, as so we allege? What madethem Displaced Persons, except their flight from Communism? What keeps them from repatriation, except their horror of Communism? If we wish to select immigrants to fit our American scheme of life, our most promising field lies among such people.

American history and American liberty have drawn heavily upon Displaced Persons. What else were the founders of New England, the Quakers of Pennsylvania, the Huguenots, the Catholics of Maryland, the refugees from the Irish famine, the liberals driven out of Germany by the triumphant reaction in 1848, the fugitives from Russia in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth?

Each new wave of Displaced Persons has meant a body of new citizens who had learned by bitter experience how to value American liberty...

It appears that when a branch of tree of liberty becomes old, it can bear only bitter and wormy fruit. A fresh scion is needed, of persons to whom liberty is a reality — the most priceless possession of man.

(Alvin Johnson, Yale Review, Spring, 1947. Published Quarterly by the Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.)

Cardinal Spellman, in a letter to the Citizens Committee on Displaced Person:

"The true purpose of democracy is man's freedom. Yet, two years after V-E Day, there are still nearly one million people of many faiths and from many lands living in exile amidst the desolation of European camps and barracks. There displaced persons are without homes or homelands. A million lives are at the mercy of the United Nations... I pray that, loyal to those God-inspired principles upon which our government was founded, we open our hearts and doors to those starving, suffering peoples and lead the way for all the United Nations to follow." — Common Council.

MORE ABOUT THE LITH DP'S

Mr. Gardiner, Canadian Minister of Agriculture, who had been attending the conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN in Paris said this about the Lithuanians and other Balts in the DP camps:

"They are a wonderful people, a credit to any community in which they might live.... (He)... could think of no better privilege than the chance to live among such people."

Jim: When Frank Sinatra visited a sheep ranch in the West, 82 rams committed suicide.

Jim: Why?

Jim: He sang, "There'll Never Be Another Ewe!"

A 7-years-old girl, attending church for the first time, was surprised to see the people around her kneel suddenly. When she asked what the reason was, her mother replied:

"Hush! They are going to say their prayers!"

"What!" exclaimed the little girl. "With all their clothes on?"